

JAN 7 1963



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

January 4, 1963

Dear Joshua:

Thank you so much for your note of December 26. You are quite correct that I have been working very assiduously on the Administration's legislative proposals for this coming session of Congress. I believe that as matters stand at this moment we will have a splendid set of proposals that will improve the standards of educational excellence in this Nation. Every effort has been made that I know of to assure that there will be no Federal control or interference into professional matters.

The question that you raise is, of course, a basic one in our democracy. If public money is going to be used to support public objectives, there must be some accounting to the public. (Professionals will define the "some" differently from others.) If not, then one is inevitably forced into agreeing that the Defense Department should be run by the military, that the economics of medical care should be determined solely by physicians, and that matters relating to the clearance of new drugs should be handled by the pharmaceutical houses. The only way to avoid any interference is to allow professionals to have their own way without any checks or balances.

I agree with you that politics should be kept out of education, medical research, the NIH and the universities. However, my experience has indicated to me that the politics of professional groups and the politics within universities are less subject to control than political party politics or individual politics.

On the matter of the NIH, I note you say you would like the Executive branch to have been more courageous (although you do not say in what way). Part of the "NIH problem" comes from the fact that many of the professional medical research people were not courageous enough in what they said to the Congress about NIH. Each professional group, properly trying to get as much as it could, did not see the overall picture. Every action begets a reaction.

I agree with you that a lot more needs to be done to devise well insulated education and health institutions that can keep politics out and still

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allow for the important principle of democratic control. This is a matter of our continuing attention. If at any point you feel that you can give us more specific suggestions as to what we might do, you can be sure that I personally will try to do anything in this direction.

Sincerely,



Wilbur J. Cohen
Assistant Secretary

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